

link into the narrower concept of colposcopy practised specifically in response to cervical dyskaryosis detected by the Cervical Cytology Screening Programme.

The application of colposcopy within genitourinary medicine should be complementary to, and certainly not in competition with colposcopy as practised widely and effectively in gynaecology throughout the UK.

It was helpful that we may both conclude with complete agreement "carefully prepared prospective research" is required, and for this reason it was not appropriate to consider primary colposcopy within the context of the NCN Report.³

T R MOSS
Doncaster Royal Infirmary,
Armthorpe Rd, Doncaster DN2 5LT, UK

- 1 Griffiths M. The value of colposcopy in genitourinary medicine. *Genitourin Med* 1995;71: 4270.
- 2 Moss TR, Hawkswell J, Fogarty B, Dadswell C. The value of primary colposcopy in genitourinary medicine—a six year review. *Genitourin Med* 1994;70:191–5.
- 3 The role of genitourinary medicine cytology and colposcopy in cervical screening: Does the GU female population merit a different cytology/colposcopy strategy? NHS Cervical Screening Programme. National Coordinating Network, Oxford 1994. Moss TR, Hicks DA, eds.

BOOK REVIEWS

Genital Warts. Human Papillomavirus Infection. Edited by ADRIAN MINDEL. London. Edward Arnold. (Pp 292; £48.) ISBN 0-340-57924-2

This multi-author monograph will be of immense interest not only to clinicians dealing with HPV infection and its sequelae, but also to molecular biologists working in the field of HPV research who wish to get an insight into the clinical aspects of this infection. It's written in a succinct but eminently readable style and covers the common clinical manifestations, in addition to the virology, epidemiology, laboratory diagnosis, immunology, and prospects for vaccines.

The first chapter, *Virology*, assumes little and gives a very good overview of the subject. After reading this chapter the "papillomata talk" which inevitably confounds the newcomer to this field starts to make sense. Tables, line diagrams, and electron micrographs are all of the highest quality and used to good effect. The table listing HPV types characterised to date shows the rate of progress in this area; 60 are described in the text; approximately 80 types are now characterised.

Cathy Critchlow and Laura Koutsky's chapter on epidemiology is a masterly overview of a complex subject. The section on issues in interpreting prevalence studies was particularly well presented and highlights many of the reasons for the marked variations in reported prevalence rates.

The seven chapters on the clinical aspects

of papillomavirus infection cover the much written about association of papillomavirus with cervical cancer and precancer in addition to the association with other anogenital tract tumours including penile and anal cancer, treatments modalities and a particularly useful overview on HPV infection in children.

Immunology of HPV infection is covered in a single chapter written by Margaret Stanley *et al.* The clarity of this particular chapter on a rapidly evolving subject is excellent and gives one a good introduction to this complex area. It is as up to date as it is possible to get and it was particularly pleasing to see as yet unpublished work described.

My only criticism of the book was the order in which the chapters appeared. The last two chapters would have been more appropriately sited before the chapters on the clinical aspects rather than following them. I believe that it will be a long time before any other book on this subject will be published which will be as comprehensive but at the same time be as reader friendly. I would recommend this as an essential book in any genitourinary medicine clinic library, and it will serve as an invaluable reference source for those involved in HPV research.

DAVID ROWEN

SEXplained . . . The Uncensored Guide to Sexual Health. By HELEN KNOX. London. Knox Publishing. 1995. (Pp 81; £9.99.) ISBN 0-952-6224-0-8

Genitourinary medicine or sexual health specialists may be interested in this book for a number of reasons. Some clinics may provide health educational books in waiting rooms as an alternative to jaded Sunday supplements. Written information is useful in supporting advice given by clinicians and of course any number of people with sexual health problems never use specialist services. Good self-help guides ought to direct patients to appropriate services.

The "uncensored" label is redolent of those gravel-voiced film previews at the cinema. And it is the author's stated intention to provide a hard-hitting, no-nonsense consumer guide. Whether or not this is the best approach is down in part to personal preference, but also to one's belief in the value of shock tactics as an approach to health promotion: do smokers change their behaviour after seeing diseased lungs in formalin? What is the effect of including full-colour photographs of diseased genitals in this book? Helen Knox quite clearly believes in giving the full picture. This presumably explains the cost which is much higher than for comparable publications but within the reach of institutions. Having opted for 12 colour plates, 5 are devoted to syphilis and another to herpetic breasts. Other com-

moner but perhaps less dramatic conditions are therefore neglected.

The book is easy to read with diagrams, cartoons, black and white photographs and a punchy question and answer style which ought to be accessible to the general public and a younger audience in particular. Some may want to give a more positive angle. It is worth stating for example that people can enjoy sex after an attack of herpes, that cervical cancer is slow to develop and therefore preventable, and that in Britain most people infected by hepatitis B do not develop cirrhosis and life-threatening liver disease.

Some clinicians would want to question the assertions that hepatitis C is more infectious than HIV or that NSU can cause difficulties in maintaining an erection. It is curious to find that lice and scabies cover more pages than HIV. There are additional disadvantages to being tested for HIV antibody, not given in the text, particularly social and psychological factors. I found the hepatitis chapter confusing as it did not always specify HBV, HCV, etc. The safe sex advice which aims to prevent all transmission of genital infections will be too prohibitive for some.

No book will suit all readers. 'SEXplained' will be just right for some and is sufficiently different to merit its place on the bookshelf. It is crammed with information, from condom-weakening lubricants to emergency contraception, and most common genital and sexually transmitted infections are discussed. It advocates safer sex, using GUM clinics and partner notification for STDs. In fact, even better than tucking it away on a bookshelf, consider leaving it out in waiting rooms and ask the patients what they think of it. Anything which opens up discussion between client and clinician is helpful.

MARTIN JONES

NOTICES

British Society for the Study of Vulval Disease

The next meeting will be at the Robbins Centre, University of Plymouth, 11–14 July 1996. Enquiries should be addressed to Dr GD Morrison, Dept of Genitourinary Medicine, Freedom Fields Hospital, Plymouth PL7 4JJ, UK.

13th World Congress of Sexology: Sexuality and Human Rights

Venue: Palacio de la Música y Congresos. Valencia, Spain. 25–29 June 1997. Information and Registration: Technical Secretary: Europa-Travel, S.A. Hernán Cortés, 28 46004 Valencia-Spain. Tel: 34-6-352 45 47. Fax: 34-6-352 54 97.